

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI
SOUTHERN DIVISION**

C. S.)	
)	
a Minor by and through)	
his next friend, James Shuler;)	
and)	
)	
James Shuler,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	
V.)	Case No. 07-3132-CV-S-JTM
)	
The School District)	
of Springfield - R-XII,)	
)	
Defendant.)	

ORDER

Pending before the Court is plaintiff's *Motion To Seal Case*, filed July 26, 2007 [Doc. #10] in which plaintiff asks the Court to seal this matter pursuant to the UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI PRIVACY POLICY, due to the fact that local press coverage has identified the name of the minor plaintiff.

While the Court is sympathetic to plaintiff's position in this matter, the privacy policy cited by plaintiff provides specific guidelines for protecting sensitive information, such as the names of minor children, by directing that only the initials of that child should be used. The policy cautions:

You should not include sensitive information in any document filed with the court unless such inclusion is necessary and relevant to the case. You must remember that any personal information not otherwise protected will be made available over

the Internet via the court's CM/ECF system and/or the Judiciary's program.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI PRIVACY POLICY, available at http://www.mow.uscourts.gov/dc_cmecf.htm . Despite the dictates of the Court's privacy policy, the COMPLAINT in this matter was filed on May 2, 2007 and reflected the minor plaintiff's full name. While it certainly would have been preferable for the complaint to have reflected only the minor's initials – as required by the Court's privacy policy – it is not within the Court's capabilities to un-ring that bell now. Indeed, according to plaintiff's motion, the name of the minor has already been discovered and disseminated in the local newspaper. Sealing the case will do nothing to address the disclosure that has already occurred. It is regrettable that the complaint was not filed in accordance with the privacy policy. Nonetheless, even though the propriety of protecting the identity of a minor is unquestionable, sealing an entire case from public scrutiny and conducting litigation behind closed doors is an entirely different matter. Accordingly, it is

ORDERED that plaintiff's *Motion To Seal Case*, filed July 26, 2007 [Doc. #10] is **DENIED**.

/s/ John T. Maughmer
JOHN T. MAUGHMER
U. S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE